

Remarks

The Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's final action rejecting claims 1, 2 and 4-16 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mora at al. (U.S. 6,161,113 A) in view of the Applicants' own admission, and further in view of Diamant et al. (U.S. 5,530,861 A). More specifically, these references, in combination, fail to teach or suggest all elements of the claimed invention. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the Examiner's final action.

At page 4 of the final action, the Examiner acknowledges that neither Mora nor the Applicants' background disclose the following elements recited in independent claim 1:

automatically notifying the one member that the issue document has become dated after a first specified amount of time; and

automatically archiving or deleting the issue document a second specified amount of time after the one member was notified that the issue document has become dated.

The Examiner cites Diamant at col. 6, ll. 37 to 66, and col. 9, ll. 27-35 to reach these claim limitations. However, Diamant does not teach or suggest these claim elements.

With regard to automatic notifications, Diamant does not teach automatic notifications where an issue document has become dated. While col. 6, ll. 37 to 66 teaches automatic archival of "tasks," Diamant makes no suggestion of archiving documents, or automatic notifications regarding same. This is a drawback to Diamant where, for example, an issue document is dated but should not be archived. Because Diamant does not provide for automatic notifications prior to the archival action (assuming Diamant has the capability to archive documents in the first place), the dated document could be improperly archived.

Reading Diamant beyond those passages cited by the Examiner, Diamant teaches user notifications when a "new task" is assigned to a user. (Col. 15, ll. 32-35.) In this regard,

Diamant teaches away from notifications relating to “old” issues, such as dated documents. Other references to notifications found in Diamant relate to internal system notifications between “tools” to “notify one another of completion of operations.” (e.g., col. 4, ll. 32-41.) Neither of these passages teach or suggest the recited claim elements.

The Examiner cites Diamant at col. 9, ll. 27-35 to reach the automatic deletion limitation of the above claim elements. However, Diamant does not teach automatic document deletion some period of time after a user has been notified that a document has been dated. To the contrary, Diamant only teaches deletion of “tasks” upon user intervention:

Users operate the task manager 122 to create, execute, and delete tasks.

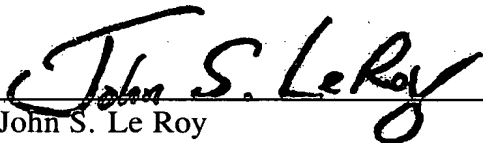
(Col. 4, ll. 54-55.)

The passage at col. 9, ll. 27-35 referencing “DeleteAction()” is “automatically invoked by the task manager 122 upon the deletion of a task.” In other words, DeleteAction() is a pre-defined deletion script, but that script is only executed when the user first operates the task manager 122 to execute a delete task. Accordingly, this passage does not teach or suggest automatic document deletion some period of time after a user has been notified that a document has been dated, as independent claim 1 recites.

For the above reasons, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the final action. Should the Examiner find the Applicants' arguments unpersuasive, the Applicants respectfully submit herewith a Notice of Appeal pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.191, together with the requisite fee.

Respectfully submitted,

SUSAN DAY et al.

By 
John S. Le Roy
Reg. No. 48,158
Attorney for Applicants

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BROOKS KUSHMAN P.C.
1000 Town Center, 22nd Floor
Southfield, MI 48075-1238
Phone: 248-358-4400
Fax: 248-358-3351